WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A lamp unit for a motor vehicle, of the type including at least one housing at least open at the front and in which is mounted a lighting module, notably a reflector, of which a rear face is fixed in the housing by means of at least one pivot element incorporating a substantially horizontal rod oriented axially, supported by the housing, of which one end incorporates a spherical head housed in a counterpart seating of a capsule which is integral with the lighting module, such that the pivot element forms a ball joint composed of the spherical head and the seating, enabling the lighting module to pivot in relation to the housing at least around the ball joint,

wherein it includes at least one retaining enclosure which is traversed by at least part of the rod, which is carried by a wall of the housing, and in which a seating receives the capsule supported vertically substantially aligned with the ball joint, so that the weight of the lighting module bears on the housing and thereby avoids having the lighting module overhanging the ball joint, and a sidewall of the enclosure has two flanges which are received in a slideway carried by the associated wall of the housing.

2. Lamp unit according to claim 1, wherein the enclosure is hollow and shaped substantially as a parallelepiped, and in that the capsule includes at least two vertically opposed bearing elements which are received in the enclosure between two opposing horizontal walls of the parallelepipedic enclosure.

3. Lamp unit according to claim 2, wherein each bearing element, in cross-section in a vertical plane parallel to the axial direction, has a bearing surface of rounded shape to allow the capsule to pivot vertically in the enclosure irrespective of the inclination of the lighting module relative to the housing.

4. Lamp unit according to claim 1, wherein a sidewall of the enclosure is carried by an associated wall of the housing.

5. Lamp unit according to claim 4, wherein the slideway which is carried by the associated wall of the housing is oriented parallel to the rod.

6. Lamp unit according to claim 5, wherein the enclosure is also held in place by means of an axial tubular guide on the housing, surrounding the rod, which passes through an aperture in a vertical rear wall of the enclosure.

7. Lamp unit according to claim 5, wherein the enclosure includes means of locking relative to the housing.

8. Lamp unit according to claim 7, wherein the locking means include an accordion-fold fastener of which one fold is designed to ride over a projecting lug on the housing and of which another fold is designed to pass through a slot in the rear wall of the enclosure and to grip a sidewall of the enclosure located in proximity to the slot.

9. Lamp unit according to claim 7 wherein the enclosure is also held in place by means of an axial tubular guide on the housing, surrounding the rod, which passes through an aperture in a vertical rear wall of the enclosure and wherein the locking means include a fastener capable of being inserted perpendicularly to the axial direction via a slot in a sidewall of the enclosure into a seating in the enclosure which is aligned with the aperture in the vertical rear wall of the enclosure to grip the tubular guide on the housing.

10. Lamp unit according to claim 8, wherein the enclosure is also held in place by means of an axial tubular guide on the housing, surrounding the rod, which passes through an aperture in a vertical rear wall of the enclosure, wherein the enclosure includes means of locking relative to the housing and wherein the pivot element is fixed and in that the rod is fixed in the tubular guide on the housing.

11. Lamp unit according to claim 8, wherein the enclosure is also held in place by means of an axial tubular guide on the housing, surrounding the rod, which passes through an aperture in a vertical rear wall of the enclosure, wherein the enclosure includes means of locking relative to the housing and wherein the

pivot element is fixed and the rod is carried by a parallelepipedic element which is inserted into the enclosure.

12. Lamp unit according to claim 10, wherein the capsule includes at least two additional horizontally opposed bearing elements which are received in the enclosure between two vertically opposed walls of the parallelepipedic enclosure.

13. Lamp unit according to claim 12, wherein each additional retaining element, in cross-section in a horizontal plane parallel to the axial direction, has a retaining surface of rounded shape to allow the capsule to pivot horizontally in the enclosure irrespective of the inclination of the lighting module relative to the housing.

14. Lamp unit according to claim 6, wherein the pivot element is mobile, the capsule being fixed axially and free in rotation relative to the mobile enclosure, and the rod is slidably mounted through the tubular guide on the housing.

15. Lamp unit according to claim 8, wherein the enclosure is also held in place by means of an axial tubular guide on the housing, surrounding the rod, which passes through an aperture in a vertical rear wall of the enclosure, wherein the enclosure includes means of locking relative to the housing and wherein the pivot element is mobile, the capsule being slidably mobile in the axial direction and free in rotation relative to the fixed enclosure, and in that the rod is slidably mounted through the tubular guide on the housing.

16. Lamp unit according to clam 1, wherein the enclosure presents a substantially rectangular transverse cross-section with a horizontal dimension greater than its vertical dimension and in that the capsule includes at least two opposing rigid lugs of a size corresponding to the vertical dimension and two opposing flexible lugs of a size corresponding to the horizontal dimension.

17. Lamp unit according to claim 16, wherein the capsule includes at least two additional horizontally opposed bearing elements which are received in the enclosure between two vertically opposed walls of the parallelepipedic

enclosure, and wherein the rigid lugs form the bearing elements and the flexible lugs form the retaining elements, to form the fixed pivot element.

18. Lamp unit according to claim 16 wherein the pivot element is mobile, the capsule being fixed axially and free in rotation relative to the mobile enclosure, and the rod is slidably mounted through the tubular guide on the housing and wherein the flexible lugs form the bearing elements, the rigid lugs being inserted with play into the enclosure, to form the mobile pivot element.

19. Lamp unit according to claim 16, wherein the capsule includes four rigid lugs arranged in opposing pairs relative to the seating, of which the opposing sides delineate a channel forming the seating.

20. Lamp unit according claim 19, wherein the opposing sides of the rigid lugs delineating the channel incorporate tabs at their free ends which are turned towards the inside of the channel to immobilise the spherical head of the rod.

21. Lamp unit according to claim 16, wherein each flexible lug is formed into the shape of a rounded blade of which only one end is integral with the capsule.

22. Lamp unit according to claim 16, wherein each flexible lug is formed into an arc shape of which both ends are integral with the capsule, one of them notably being integral with the adjacent rigid lug.

23. Lamp unit according to claim 16, wherein the flexible lugs and the rigid lugs are of a piece with the material of the capsule.